

A Brief Overview of Family Demography in the United States

Sociology 412: Family Demography

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Executive Summary

Demography looks at the human population's behaviors and factors that affect their well being. Through studying the population with regards to marriage, fertility, migration and morbidity, demographers can analyze groups and populations to provide understanding of events and predictions about the future. The purpose of this paper is to explore literature regarding topics in family demography that range from cohabitation to teen fertility.

Main conclusions:

- Cohabitation affects marriage and fertility and is strongly affected by education.
- Cohabitation tends to lead to a higher divorce rate.
- Cohabitation may lead to more childbearing for unmarried women in general.
- Lower education may lead to more cohabitation and less use of contraceptives.
- Function of marriage is something that changed over time
- Marriage rates have declined in the past decade; there are fewer marriages now than ever before
- When discussing marriage, race is a very important factor to take into account
- There are many socio-economic benefits to marriage
- Reasons for marriage have evolved over time
- Women who earned a higher education and/or entered the workforce made financial gains as well as gains in their home life.
- Primary caretakers have changed as fathers and grandparents have stepped up to care for children.
- Families separated by borders still had the same responsibilities and shared the same burden as families living together.
- Overview of fertility and recent trends into what has occurred in America, as well as the rest of the developed world.
- Focus shifts to the specific reasons for America's fertility rate being what it is, including infant and maternal mortality, contraception, and racial disparities in various social constructs such as the prison system and workforce.

- The relationship between education level (specifically college), socioeconomic standing, and fertility is also examined.
- Concluded with a brief look into fertility in developing countries to compare to the United States.
- Contraception is one of the top ten greatest health achievements of the 20th century
- Contraception can be linked to later marital age, smaller families, longer birth intervals, and the control over how many children a couple wishes to have.
- The main reasons women use birth control are--they are not ready to have children; want to focus on their life goals, and having a child would interfere/postpone them; not financially stable to properly care and provide for a child; and they like the fact that they now have control over their fertility.
- Even though women use contraceptives, there are still a lot of unplanned pregnancies.
- Issues with funding
- Teen fertility has steadily been decreasing.
- Life hardships such as abuse and family instability increase the likelihood of pregnancy for teenage girls.
- Shows about teenage pregnancy do not increase teen pregnancy rates, and may in fact lead to lower rates.
- Teenage pregnancy doesn't have as pertinent economic, social and educational problems as has previously been said. However, it does seem to cause significant emotional problems.
- Divorce has always been a part of society but the magnitude and numbers have changed.
- Social acceptance of cohabitation may keep divorce rates where they are.
- Marriage dissolution is most often due to relational and/or behavioral issues not physical abuse.
- There are gender differences in the reasons couples give for their divorce.

- Negative consequences of divorce are more severe for women and children than men.
- Better health and positive outcomes arise out of divorce if the situation and circumstances were negative.

Cohabitation and its Widespread Effects

Executive Summary

- Cohabitation affects marriage and fertility and is strongly affected by education.
- Cohabitation tends to lead to a higher divorce rate.
- Cohabitation may lead to more childbearing for unmarried women in general.
- Lower education may lead to more cohabitation and less use of contraceptives.

Cohabitation has increased dramatically over the past three decades (may want to reword this since it was true in 2000, but not 2015), climbing from 500,000 couples in 1970 to nearly 5 million in 2000 (U. S. Bureau of the Census 2001). This dramatic increase has affected the values of the people. In Pamela J. Smock's research article, she interprets how current findings and themes about increasing cohabitation affects human values. She makes sure to specify how cohabitation is a new phenomenon and will need to be consistently researched as it expands.

A common trend that Smock discusses is the lifespan of cohabiting relationships. Smock claims, "Only about one sixth of cohabitations lasts at least three years and only a tenth last five years or more" (Smock 2000). She also explains that children living in cohabiting households have similar arrangements to those of stepfamilies. Smock discusses why cohabitation has become so common, pointing at the shift of marriage in general. There is a difference in cohabitation trends amongst those of different levels of education. For example, about 60% of high school dropouts cohabit while only 37% of college graduates cohabit. This article touches on the many effects cohabitation has on societal values including gender roles, marriage stability, and the prevalence of cohabitation.

Thomas DeLeire and Ariel Kalil (2005) take a different approach to values related to cohabitation. Their article, discusses the allocation of their resources compared to other types of families. They used data from the Consumer Expenditure Survey and found that the fraction of children born to unmarried mothers has increased. From this, they concluded that cohabiting couples with children will make poorer physical or mental health choices that focus on the individual, rather than focusing on the children. To narrow down the expenditures, DeLeire and Kalil identified several spending categories: alcohol and tobacco, children's clothing, recreation,

and reading materials at home, health care, education, and child care. They found that spending patterns differ significantly between cohabiting-parent families and other families. They also (repetitive sentence structure, maybe change the beginning of this sentence to, in addition the duo found) found that cohabiting-parent families also spend a greater amount on alcohol and tobacco, while spending significantly less on health care, education, and more on childcare. Smock, DeLeire and Kalil came to the conclusion that cohabitation is correlated with the way money and education are valued.

Researchers Jonathan Vespa and Matthew Painter (2011) similarly support the financial approach to cohabitation by looking at the history and wealth accumulations of cohabiting couples in their research article. Vespa and Painter use the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 as a basis for data to explore the wealth trajectories of married individuals. Respondents were interviewed annually from 1979 until 1994 and then biennially thereafter with an 80 percent retention rate with those eligible through 2004. According to the data, marriage has a strong, positive relationship with wealth accumulation regardless of race, ethnicity, or cohabitation history. They also discovered that spousal cohabitation is associated with a beneficial marital outcome. Due to these findings (think about rewording this, as a result of these findings seems to flow a little better), spousal cohabiters might change their financial behaviors accordingly and work toward meeting economic goals. We dive into the effects of cohabitation in three realms: marriage, children and education, in order to better understand the possible effects cohabitation has on our social structure.

Cohabitation and Marriage

In previous centuries, childbearing was considered a concept that could only occur within the jurisdictions of marriage. Those who were unmarried rarely lived together. Marriage used to be viewed as the authenticity stamp as to whether or not a couple was together, and served as a major means economic arrangement in earlier periods. But now, cohabiting appears to operate as a substitute for marriage and because of its prevalence, it is now widely accepted.

Brown, VanHook, and Glick conducted a study on the generational differences in cohabitation and marriage in the United States. They used a Current Population Survey (CPS) to examine these generational differences between cohabitation and marriage. They focused on men

and women ages 20-34 from 2000-2004. Their results show that cohabitation levels rose dramatically across generations. Also included in their study are the different factors that contribute to these changes, such as educational, racial and ethnic groups. Because there are no reliable studies on every racial group, their focus was limited to Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics. They found that “cohabitation is most common among those at the lowest strata in the United States and other countries as well.” Ultimately, the main finding of this article was that people who cohabit tend to have a limited education, a lower income, and a lower number of home ownership.

This cultural phenomenon is particularly interesting to study because of the drastic increase in cohabitation. Karen Guzzo (2014) explains how past research shows marriages that formed after 1995 were more likely to end in divorce compared to those formed after 2000, which were less likely to ever go into the next stage of their relationship, marriage. Previous studies have shown that fewer cohabitating couples are leading to marriage. However, young people are still continuing to get involved in these romantic unions. Cohabitation is somehow strongly tied to marriage, but marriage does not appear to be a greater part of cohabitation. A study by Setterson & Ray shows that cohabitation increased by over 30 percent for young women aged 19-24 from the 1980s and 2010. Many different factors, such as demographic and socioeconomic status, can play into the increase of cohabitation. The purpose of this research is to find out if there is a link between cohabitation and marriage, and how it is changing among never-married young adults 18-34. They used the results from the National Survey of Family Growth from the years 2002, 2006-2010 and looked to see if there is a chance of marital intentions present at the start of cohabitation. Their findings show that there is an increase in cohabiting instability and a decrease in those who are cohabitating transitioning to marriage.

The past few decades have seen a substantial increase of cohabitation. It is on the rise, marriage is down, and the divorce rate remains high in the United States. It is most common to see people 24 and younger participating in this living arrangement, however, the USDHHS found that more than 60 percent of women ages 25-39 reported they have cohabited with a partner. Brown, VanHook, and Glick look at the rise in immigrant cohabiting in the US and concluded that not only are there more immigrants that cohabit, but it is also more common among those

with fewer socioeconomic resources. In another article, Teachman and Polonko (1990) researched the relationship between cohabitation and marital stability in the US and suggest that premarital cohabitation increases the risk of subsequent marital instability. In contrast, Kohm and Groen explain in their study on cohabitation and the future of marriage, that social scientists have consistently found a positive correlation between cohabitation before marriage and divorce. The only common finding in all of these studies is the fact that, regardless of the large amount of the population cohabitation, marriage remains very important and preferred. People seem to cohabitate out of fear of their marriage failing or the work that marriage requires. The major difference between marriage and cohabitation in contemporary culture (in the US) has to do with time horizons and commitment.

Cohabitation and Childbearing

In past decades, most couples were not nearly as sexually open or physically involved as today's current population. The contraceptive revolution paved the way for a separation between marriage and sexuality. Along with this, cohabitation has risen and changed the landscape of child bearing. Unmarried births have become more common due to the larger numbers of cohabiting couples. Sociologist Larry Bumpass notes, "family life in the U.S. has undergone profound changes with serious implications for the lives of children." Cohabitation, which was once a rare and deviant behavior is now a very common practice (Bumpass, 2000). More people are living together without marrying and subsequently children are being born in households in which the parents are not married. Cohabitation has also affected childbearing because it makes single parenting more common. Often times, the children live with the mother instead of the father. Many divorced women enter cohabiting relationships after their marriages end, which means their kids are then being raised in a cohabiting household.

Cohabitation has increased the fertility of unmarried women in many ways. Cohabitation provides a very suitable alternative to marriage that still allows their children to be raised in the typical two parent household. Cohabitors are more likely to plan to have kids than their single counterparts. This is solely due to the fact that they feel cohabiting gives them a higher propensity to eventually be married. Cohabitation seems to almost be the middle ground, or compromise, between being married and being single. When it comes to having children,

cohabitation awards couples with a safety net to reproduce despite the fact that they are unmarried.

Cohabitation and Education

In addition to marriage and childbearing, cohabitation is also correlated with education. Education is one of the most influential factors when determining whether a couple will cohabit, or the certain types of actions they take once they do. In a 2014 study conducted by Heather Rackin & Christina Gibson-Davis, they discovered that “low-educated mothers cohabitation operated similar to marriage, but for moderate-educated mothers cohabitation was a response to pregnancy.” The researchers found a significant decrease in pre-conception birth while married among lower-educated women with increasing births in cohabiting unions. However, highly educated women were more likely to have their first births in the context of marriage established prior to conception.

In 2002, the use of effective contraceptive methods increased for all “union status” women, with a decline in the difference between cohabiting couples and first married couples in their likelihood of using effective contraceptive methods. Women with higher education were more likely to use effective methods of birth control, while those who were less educated tended to use less effective methods. While there was only a small difference in using effective methods between married and cohabiting couples, the use of contraceptive methods was greater for cohabiting couples rather than married couples. Research suggested that cohabiting couples with less education tend to act most “married-liked” in terms of contraceptive behavior, resulting in less usage of contraceptives, (Sweeney 2012) .

The number of teen mothers who are cohabitating with their child’s father has been consistently increasing over time. However, only 40 percent of fathers live with the mothers three years after birth. Research has shown that women who continue relationships with the fathers receive less education. This resulted in a smaller likelihood for them to pursue higher education. When on their own as single mothers or with a different partner, there was a higher chance of receiving further education (Eshbaugh 2008).

Children’s education seems to be affected by cohabitation rather than marriage. When broken down by economic factors, this conclusion is not supported. Using data collected from

10,511 kindergarten children and their parents from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Julie E. Artis' Maternal Cohabitation and Child Well-Being Among Kindergarten Children (2007) compares the differences in child well-being between cohabiting 2-biological-parent families, cohabiting stepfamilies, married stepfamilies, and married 2-biological-parent families. Unfortunately, the study found no significant differences between the different groups. The well-being and outcomes in education for these children are all virtually the same with "one exception in reading skills; children in cohabiting families continue to lag behind their counterparts in married two-biological-parent families in reading," yet once "factors such as child characteristics, economic factors, stability, depressive symptoms, and parenting practices are controlled," then the children turn out virtually the same whether the parents are just cohabiting or married.

An Abbreviated Look Into Marriage in the United States; Past, Present, and Future

Executive Summary:

- Function of marriage is something that changed over time
- Marriage rates have declined in the past decade; there are fewer marriages now than ever before
- When discussing marriage, race is a very important factor to take into account
- There are many socio-economic benefits to marriage
- Reasons for marriage have evolved over time

Marriage has long been an important milestone in a young person's life, but the history and circumstances behind these unions are often overlooked. In this section we begin by briefly discussing the history of marriage, the current statistics for marriages in the United States, and the numerous external factors that influence who and when individuals chose to enter into marriage such as the current climate of the country, gender, race, and economic standing. Further, we will touch upon the economic benefits of getting married and the factors that may lead to a successful union.

History of Marriage

Now more than ever before marriages are perceived to be based on love instead of economic arrangements as was the trend in the past. Stern and Ruth (2008) discuss how contemporary marriages have morphed into something different in their article *Winding Road from Form to Function: A Brief History of Contemporary Marriage*. The article begins with a discussion on the ways families have changed over the past half-century and the function that it has in modern days. The authors describe the function of families and marriage as attempting to make the nuclear family of utmost importance during mid-twentieth century America. After briefly discussing families of the 1950s the article talks about the cultural shift of marriage and divorce. The second half of the article mainly focuses on how marriage has changed over the past half-century. One of the more important claims of the article is that the latest change in marriage is the “law of no-fault divorce.” After discussing how much divorce has changed marriage, the article continues to discuss the functions of the recent day marriage in society, stating that people in marriages are part of an “association” in America. Lastly, the article states the ways in which marriage has remained the same from the 1950s to modern times. When looking at the ways marriage has transformed throughout history, the change in divorce laws also become more evident.

Researcher Demby (2014) explains that there are fewer marriages now than ever before. Her study suggests that 25 percent of people will become middle aged and still have yet to marry. The non-married rates have doubled for Latinos and Whites since 1960. However, despite this decrease in marriages, over half of the never-married people still desire to marry one day. This suggests that although people are not marrying at early ages this does not indicate people are foregoing marriage. To help explain this trend, the authors propose several reasons for the declining marriage rates. One reason is that people are delaying marriage. Secondly, it may be that more unmarried people are cohabiting and raising children without marrying first. Additionally, there could also be a number of economic factors within people’s lives that make it difficult to become married. The main example of this in the article is when Boo followed two African American women that lived in the housing project in Oklahoma City. The men who were often available for them were men that were unemployed and that would hurt her financial

standing to be married to an employed person. This is a way that makes it hard for poor people to marry. Because marriage is often a way to enhance one's social standing in life, when one lives in an area in which all the people available to marry are in the same social class as they are, it is then more difficult to improve one's social class by marriage.

Recent Decline in Marriage

The reasons the number of marriages have declined in the United States is something that is in need of further study. Following the trends of major historical events gives an insight into the ways marriage has changed. Schoen and Canudas-Romo (2006) argue that we need to take into account period data, or how timing and events affect the rates of marriage, divorce and fertility in their article Timing effects on Divorce: 20th Century Experience in the United States. The researchers explain, for example, that a year with a bad economy may affect these things much more than we take into account. No timing effects have been done in regards to divorce, a problem the authors find in recent research on divorce. They found that in many cases, the period divorce measures of different cohorts are different from what the average divorce rate was in that period of time. This suggests that period data is incredibly important to consider when examining divorce rates.

This article discusses marital happiness and the preconceived idea that marriage happiness is a U-shaped curve, in which happiness is high at the beginning of marriage, then it declines during the middle years and increases again in the later years. VanLaningham, Johnson, and Amato look at previous studies and find that more recent studies mirror those from the past. In their article Marital Happiness, Marital Duration, and the U-Shaped Curve: Evidence from a Five-Wave Panel Study (2001), they took their data from the Marital Instability over the Life Course study. They found that in cross-sectional data, the U-shaped curve was present, but in a longitudinal study happiness slowly declines throughout marriage. They found that there is a correlation between marital happiness and marital duration. The steepest declines in marital happiness occur in the earlier years and later years of marriage. The authors contend that this study provides evidence for the U-shaped pattern of marital happiness over the life course but it is not typical of US marriages because of the cross-sectional design of the study.

When it comes to marriage, race is a very important factor to take into account. Race not only affects our society economically, but it also has the power to impact one's values, beliefs, and perceptions based on their upbringings and surroundings. Understanding race in our society is vital to studying marriage because it contributes to the outcomes and overall quality of one's particular marriage.

In Jones' (2014) article, the author discusses the use of a stress process model in which 475 Louisiana newlyweds were sampled. This research explores whether a more legally rigorous form of marriage, covenant marriage, substantially reduces depressive symptom disparities between Black and White spouses. The results suggest that Black and White wives share similar depressive symptom levels, especially within the first few months of their marriage. Results also indicate that Black husbands have higher levels of depression than do White husbands. Additionally, life stressors extensively intermediate the race gap in depressive symptoms for husbands, while buffers have little effect. After testing for stressors, buffers, and demographic measures, covenant/traditional marriage seems to buffer wives against depressive symptoms, though only weakly. For husbands, covenant marriage has no effect and does not reduce the race gap in depression. However, covenant marriage may either select on wives with better mental health or buffer against depressive symptoms for some wives, covenant marriage does not have advantages for husbands, and especially distressed Black husbands.

Important Factors of Marriage

Fryer (2007) focuses on marriages across Black, White, and Asian racial lines using U.S. census data from 1880–2000. Today, interracial marriages account for approximately 1 percent of White marriages, 5 percent of Black marriages, and 14 percent of Asian marriages. Fryer investigates the extent to which three different theories, including the theory of social exchange, of interracial marriage can account for certain time patterns. The author finds that early data states that Whites were more likely to intermarry with Blacks than with Asians, although this trend eventually reverses. The data for White-Asian marriages suggests something completely different; for the first 100 years of data these marriages were the hardest to find, but today they are the most common among interracial unions.

While Black–White parity has not yet been achieved in the United States, many gauges relating to economic and political empowerment have shown extraordinary convergence. But in the most intimate spheres of life—religion, residential location, marriage, and cohabitation—there is far less convergence. Historically, there was a distinction between economic and political equality on one side and social equality on the other. Marrying across racial lines is a rare event, even today. Interracial marriages account for approximately one percent of white marriages, five percent of black marriages, and fourteen percent of asian marriages. The data is most consistent with a Becker-style marriage market model in which objective criteria of a potential spouse, their race, and the social price of intermarriage are central. Ultimately, social intimacy is a way of measuring whether or not a majority group views a minority group on equal footing. The primary motivation for this paper explores the division between political and social inequality in the unlovely history of black–white relations in America and how interracial intimacy may be a more appropriate barometer for the closing of the divide than labor market statistics, but some of the more interesting patterns in the data concern Asian intermarriage.

In addition to racial background a major player on the influence of marriage is an individual's economic standing at the time, as made clear by McLaughlin & Litcher's (1997) investigation of poverty's effect on the marital behavior of young women. The research duo use data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to examine changes for poor young women and women who are not poor. The survey included American Women ages 14-22 and data detailed their employment, marital status, education, and family background. The pair found that non-poor women are more likely than their counterparts to marry, but poor women who have jobs were more likely to marry than those who do not. The researchers additionally found that the lower availability of mates and an increased welfare payment lowered the probability of marriage.

Schwartz (2005) summarizes some of the relevant research highlighting the many socio-economic benefits of marriage. He attempts to explain not only how marriage is beneficial, but also why it is beneficial. In the interest of time and page length I will only discuss what he claims are the economic benefits of marriage. Schwartz cited Waite and Gallagher (2000) who claim that husbands earn at least ten percent more than single men do and perhaps as high as 40

percent more. This may be due to several factors, perhaps men who make more money are more likely to marry than those who make less, this could be due to what is called the selection effect. In addition to making a higher salary, married couples tend to save more of said money. This is revealed in an examination of Lupton & Smith's (2003) study which looked at the net worth of individuals in their fifties and early sixties and found that husbands and wives individually have much greater net worth than all their counterparts (the never-married, the divorced, the widowed and the separated). Married people can save more because they can specialize in certain areas, making them better at doing specific jobs and not paying others outside the home to do tasks, such as making dinner for the family instead of eating out at a restaurant. What's more, Schwartz credits social norms as another financial benefit of being married. Marriage encourages behavior that accumulates wealth such as buying a house or setting up a college savings fund for children. Schwartz argues this wage premium, increase in individual net worths and motivating social norms of wealth building are all thanks to the legal and/or holy union of a couple.

Karney's (2010) article argues how couples maintain an intimate relationship with each other and help each other succeed. The author insists how happy couples keep marriages healthy. They are asked to evaluate each other's specific details of their relationships are the most important elements for the success of the marriage. People are not more likely to change their behaviors or perspectives in terms of their marriage life because they might not like to accept the others' opinion. However, he mentions that couples who stay happy tend to be flexible with regards to their beliefs. They are able to notice and change over time what is the most important elements in their relationships now. He added that changing their beliefs are crucial parts over time because some beliefs are just becoming positive things in their relationships. On the other hand, their beliefs are just becoming negative things in their relationships. It is a difficult thing to maintain an intimate relationship with each other and spend a successful marriage life, but if couples recognize each other's negative aspects and their faults, they do not tend to divorce in the early years of marriage and they have more stable satisfaction because they also hold positive views of their marriage. In addition, charitable explanations for their partner's negative or disappointing behavior are also key for couples who tend to not to have a successful marriage life. The author says that when they have low stress, they are most likely to generate more

charitable explanations for not affecting to their marriage life. One other key to not blame their partners for negative behaviors is to have low stress each other so that they can be more charitable explanations for their partners' attitudes.

Conclusion

In summary, the function and definition of marriage will constantly be changing overtime to conform the way US society views it. The function of marriage is something that changes over time from being related to gaining a higher socioeconomic status to being more relatable with choosing a lifelong partner because of love. The way that marriage is currently viewed at a given point in history also affects the way that families are focused and how families are viewed in society. It is something that will always be held in society as a vital statistic in a person's life, but with the current trends of contemporary views of marriage, it may not always be held as important as it may have been in the past. It may not be as important as it may have been in the past but there are always advantages of getting married from being happier to having a higher socioeconomic status. The views and trends of marriage are constantly changing but it is an event that changes the course of two people's lives.

Roles in the Family

Executive Summary

- Women who earned a higher education and/or entered the workforce made financial gains as well as gains in their home life.
- Primary caretakers have changed as fathers and grandparents have stepped up to care for children.
- Families separated by borders still had the same responsibilities and shared the same burden as families living together.

While we have discussed changes in marriage and the prevalence of cohabitation, it is important also to note the changing roles of the unit within cohabitations and marriages: families. The role of the family is something that has fluctuated over the years, and rapidly in the last several decades. With industrialization and changing gender roles, diverse family structures become more prevalent. On a macro level, families have begun shifting from a patriarchal unit to

a more ambiguous, shifting foundation. Families previously depended on the male of the household to be the sole breadwinner. However, following World War II, women began entering the workforce in higher proportions to support the economy while men were away at war. As Blau (1964) stated, it was a time of “prevailing social norms,” in which women would concentrate on domestic activities and men would concentrate on work. After the 1950s, women began attaining higher education with civil rights laws and began valuing work as a means of self-worth and prestige, as the dominant group (men) has always done.

Women’s relationships with their husbands also shifted during this time period. With their newfound economic value external to the home, wives were able to supplement the household income. Women no longer stood in the background and stepped up to assist their husbands, who went from sole breadwinners to chief breadwinners (Scanzoni, 1997). Though men were still earning more than their wives, women were able to help their husbands support their families. Increasing numbers of young, highly educated women began bargaining with their husbands for chief life interests. Decisions became jointly made such as when to have children, household tasks, and even where to live (Scanzoni, 1997). These decisions had previously been made by the husband, but with changing gender roles and shifting expectations, women now had a say in family matters. Wives have abandoned their passive acceptance of men’s decisions to actively negotiate their own interests (Scanzoni, 1997). Families became open to negotiation and redefining family structure that institutional norms could no longer support.

As women’s roles outside of the home began to change, inevitably, the role of mother and father was subject to change as well. More so ‘when?’, ‘how many?’ and ‘whether’ became common questions for families that traditionally had never been up for discussion. Another question that has come into play in the last century is ‘who raises the children?’ Increasingly, family structures were experiencing a change as the variety and roles changed within the immediate and distant family. One factor that changed was the role of grandparents because more than ever, they were raising their grandchildren in place of their parents. The most cited cause of this change in caregiving is substance abuse on the part of the parents. According to data from the 2000 census, this translates into approximately 2.3 and 2.4 million grandparents as primary caregivers to around 4.5 million children (Kropf, 2003). While this presents obvious

challenges to the family dynamic in terms of age structure and necessary reciprocal care that may or may not be present, most grandparents admit to a sense of purpose and companionship in their new role. The typical traditional two-parent, multi-children structure has been replaced by families headed by grandparents, same-sex couples, single parents and stepparents (Kropf, 2003). Along with the changing structure of families comes changing interrelationships within families.

In addition to caring for children, family roles have shifted in the caregiving of one another, regardless of age. In society's demographic imperative, baby boomers are aging rapidly and rely on their children and society as a whole to provide for their care. However, in the second half of the twentieth century, it has been noted that older adults are more financially stable, while younger adults have experienced a greater financial strain. As a result of this, young adults have been returning to the nest, or moving back in with their parents for a sense of financial relief. In recent times, younger adults have greater financial dependency on their parents than previous generations. This has had dire consequences on family dynamics, as young adults may delay family planning as they struggle to become financially stable. This coresidence has profound implications for the family as young adults in essence delay independence and starting families of their own (Kahn, Goldscheider, and García-Manglano, 2013).

Parents have enormous influence over their children. From an early age, parents instill values in their children and provide for them financially. Parents also decide the pedigree of education their children will receive, and this has long term effects. As Carla B. Smith explains, "Parents, it would appear, build images in the minds of their children. The parents become a visual model for their children to imitate," which she later points out, based on studies, that when parents read in front of their child/children, they are likely to read more and do well in school (Smith, 2015). It is beneficial for parents to read to their children, but studies show that "whether parents were reading a newspaper or magazine, whether they were reading a book or searching for information, the frequency of that image was even more influential than was reading aloud to children" (Smith, 2015). The content of what they read was more important than the frequency of their reading. Education has the ability to influence whom an individual chooses to marry in the long run. This leads to "educational homogamy" or people of similar educational

backgrounds marrying each other. The family has an important role in shaping the younger generations that comprise it, and parents are among the most influential.

In our society, parents are usually held accountable for the safety and future of their children. Since parents do play an important role, having an absent parent affects the structure of the family in distinct ways. McLanahan et. al explains that there are various caretaking responsibilities for children depending on various family structures. He also states that, “Fathers spend less time with their children if they do not live with them, leaving mothers in single-mother families with more responsibility” (McLanahan et. al, 2008). Ideally single parent families should split caretaking responsibilities evenly, but that doesn’t not happen. The structure of a family does play a role within the family and outside of the family as well. Changes in family structure should also be viewed through the lens of the family’s racial composition, as race can correlate to different family structures. The changes in family structure often worsens racial inequalities.

The effects of single parent families in general can be seen in racial, gender and class inequalities. Studies have pointed out that, “over the past four decades, income inequality has increased and family structures have diversified” (McLanahan et. al, 2008). As the typical mother-father households with dual incomes changes, the income available to families also changes. Continuing, society has progressed in educational attainment, which has affected the roles and responsibilities that individuals have in the family. The progress and increased equality in society inevitably changed the role of women as mothers and wives and men as fathers and husbands. The quality of family life has changed as more people are receiving a higher education. Most families in the US now have dual-incomes. Women have more resources, and there has been an increase in quality of child growth and development (Jones & Frick, Barnett & Marshall, 2010).

Health benefits vary based on the parents. Researchers found that people who are married, particularly men, report less mental stress and better physical well-being than single people (Barnett & Marshall, 1993). Although women are more present in the workplace than in the past, many men in heterosexual families still feel it is their responsibility to be the primary breadwinner. This stress surprisingly does not hinder a husband’s or father’s mental and physical

well-being. Studies have found that the majority of stress men feel stems from their professional life. The work induced pressure affects single men more than married men with healthy family roles. Working men in families generally reported that they find their roles as professionals, husbands, and fathers across the board more rewarding (Barnett & Marshall, 1993). However, married men reported that the majority of physical and mental stressors stemmed from their professional duties over their family responsibilities. Barnett and Marshall determined that the emotional boost received from the marital and parental roles significantly increases overall well-being.

Although there are many benefits for men in marriage, many women greatly benefit from being in a stable family as well. As women have increased their status and gained more opportunities, the aspirations of many women have dramatically increased. Women that are in healthy marriages can share the burden of parenting, giving them the opportunity to excel in other areas (Barnett & Marshall, 1993). Women feeling more self-efficient and more content in their personal accomplishments translates into better marriages, more efficient parenting, and a better lifestyle for the children (Jones & Frick, 2010).

Nowadays, gaining an education is more convenient and readily available, so women have more opportunities for self improvement in the workforce. The women's suffrage movement has spurred changes that allowed women to have more of a say in society. They were able to allocate more resources for their well-being, notably the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act (Jones and Frick, 232). Schmidt explains that before the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act, the means by which improved hygiene, nutrition, and child health were transmitted in the United States were door-to-door visits by nurses (Jones and Frick, 232). This act dramatically increased public health services and improved the quality of women's lives. This act made it possible for both mother and child to receive better medical attention and for mothers to be well informed on how to live a healthy and productive life. It gave them better resources and circumstances to effectively reproduce ultimately, fulfilling their roles as wives, mothers, and women in the United States.

Women have not only found equality in voting and education, but also in choice of who they decide to marry. In Australia, where family norms have recently been transitioning much

like the United States, women have more rights and are able to sustain better lifestyles without a male headed household (Perlesz, Brown, Lindsay, McNair, deVaus, & Pitts, 2006). Lesbian couples are looking less at the importance of a rigid family structure, but more on family processes and development. They continue to fulfill the roles family should satisfy, such as providing love, a good home, and giving their children the best possible life they could possibly give. The lesbian couples in Australia focus on the idea of family, instead of what a family should look like, which blurs the individual roles of family, but still serves the same functions as a heterosexual family. Though some family roles and structures are remaining relatively the same, the family structure does have room for fluidity within its structure. With this fluidity, it is safe to say that the current family structure and family norms are less defined in the United States and around the world.

Many individuals migrate to the United States in search for opportunities that are unattainable in their motherland. As a result, 20% (42.8 million immigrants) of the estimated 214 million immigrants and refugees worldwide, reside in the United States (Schapiro et. al, 2013). They leave behind everything, including their family and friends, along with other material goods. Amongst those that leave, many are parents looking to create a better future for their children, thus affecting the structure of the family. Amongst immigrant families from South America and other various parts of the world, it is believed that the role of the father is to provide for the family. Therefore, when a father migrates to the United States for work without his children, he is said to be fulfilling the traditional provider role (Schapiro et. al, 2013). Even though the immigrant father resides in the U.S., he still plays a major role for family in his home country.

As discussed previously, legislation like the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act improved the lives of women. This act improved family roles as it allowed women to fulfill their roles as mothers and wives. In regards to immigrant families, those same policies can at times, hurt their goals. Undocumented adults and children that do not have legal status in the U.S. may be deported to countries in which they have not lived for years, sometimes shattering the hopes of a better future (Schapiro et. al, 1993). Even though these immigrants have their families back home, they use themselves as an instrument to assist their families, benefiting the families in

return. As Schapiro et. al states, “Continued knowledge development in this field can inform family and immigration policy, as well as provide insights to health and other professionals working with reunifying families”(Schapiro et. al, 1993).

Family structures have changed, but nevertheless, family has multiple meanings. The sources reviewed have pointed to diverse sorts of variables that contribute to family life including historical policies, changing gender roles, and societal changes. Each of these has played its part in altering the foundation of family life. As discussed, there have been many changes to occur in the last couple of centuries as society continues to embrace new norms and expand its moral lens. The diversity surrounding the concept of ‘family’ has seen significant changes as new norms have emerged.

Fertility

Executive Summary

- Overview of fertility and recent trends into what has occurred in America, as well as the rest of the developed world.
- Focus shifts to the specific reasons for America’s fertility rate being what it is, including infant and maternal mortality, contraception, and racial disparities in various social constructs such as the prison system and workforce.
- The relationship between education level (specifically college), socioeconomic standing, and fertility is also examined.
- Concluded with a brief look into fertility in developing countries to compare to the United States.

Populations experience change through three different demographic factors: fertility, mortality, and migration. Fertility and mortality, in most populations, are the ways in which the majority of people enter and leave a population. These two demographic functions are fluctuated throughout a country's demographic transition, both of which remain at their lowest once a country has become “developed”, or completed their demographic transition. The United States has a complex experience in their demographic transition due to its fluctuating fertility numbers.

Fertility is the defining feature of completing the demographic transition in the fourth stage. The fertility values in the United States leveled off in the early 1900s, but saw a sharp rise in the 50s due to the Baby Boom, and this resulted in the country's population growth as well as the aging population we live in today. As a country, the fertility had not truly leveled off until the 1980s. The Census Bureau website will allow us to examine various fertility statistics such as total fertility rate, age specific fertility rate, and fertility rate per woman. These statistics will allow us to create a demographic story told in the terms of fertility, as well as comparing to other countries, especially those in Western Europe where fertility rates have dropped below replacement.

While the demographic transition theory is a staple of demography, we know that America's fertility is affected by more than just the previously mentioned theory. We have seen vast increases in contraception, as well as cohabitation. Both of these things have allowed for sex outside of marriage. Marriage was the historical precursor for conception, but with these advances, this is no longer the case. Finer's article examines teaching abstinence, and the effect it has on premarital sex. Commonly held knowledge tells us that in order to bear children, one must have sex. This article tells us that the majority of people are partaking in sex before marriage, thus changing the dynamic of child rearing. Again, this is just a part of the story. The increase in premarital sex is the most important take away from our point, as traditionally sex was only for procreation, however, like many other demographic topics, the definition has changed.

Argawal's article deals with maternal and child mortality. While it is not the focus of our paper, it is worth noting that these values are important in the demographic story of America. We are a developed country that sees these rates significantly higher than those of other developed countries. Child mortality entails a birth with an almost immediate death. These values skew overall fertility figures when relating them to the entire population. With the prevalence of complications and the decline in fertility in America (as well as America being right around the replacement rate), this could become an increasingly important issue in the story of American fertility.

As previously stated, premarital sex and contraception have a major impact on the fertility rate in the United States. Throughout our history we have experienced periods of change

in regards to the birth rate due to outlying factors. In addition to the factors already stated, another major impact is the unemployment rate and job opportunity. In Colen et al.'s work these two factors are examined during the 1990s, particularly amongst White and Black women from 10 to 29 years old. This was during a time when our economy was on a major upswing causing the availability of many jobs. Two other factors that were being considered in the decline were a rising incarceration rate and changing laws and regulations pertaining to abortion. Our country has the highest incarceration rate compared to other countries. Additionally, Black men in the United States are overrepresented within the prison population. Now, since Black women have a higher risk of teen births and account for the rising fertility rate, the large proportion of incarcerated males means it is more difficult to find suitable partners. Therefore, premarital sex is less common which leads to a major decline. Additionally, because of the changing abortion rules and regulations, there are more opportunities for women to avoid pregnancy and birth.

Another area where race plays a major role in the fertility rate is in accordance to the unemployment rate. As Black men are overrepresented in the prison population, Blacks are also overrepresented in the unemployment rate. However, it is during the timeline of this study that the unemployment rate decreased greatly. Women, particularly Black women, had greater opportunity of being employed. Meaning, they had a greater chance of participating in the labor force and avoiding the higher chance of unprotected sex and pregnancy. The study also found there was little to no difference in birth rates for White women of the same age range. Due to federal action such as the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Act and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) women had more opportunity to find employment and take part in the labor market, which led to adjusting their reproductive habits and attitude. Unfortunately, this decline did not last.

In 2006, as Solomon-Fears found the teen birth rate was on a rise for the first time since 1991. While this increase was brief, Solomon-Fears believes it can be attributed to a lack of new advancement in safe sex and abstinence campaigns. Rising availability of technology and social media were leading to a more promiscuous younger generation. The teens in 2006 and 2007 had not been approached or as strongly educated as teen in the late 90s. However, the fertility rate returned to an all-time low over the next few years as the Great Recession hit the United States.

It is because of the Great Recession that jobs and income become the primary focus. Also, people understood they could not afford to provide for any new members of the family. These ideologies acted as natural contraceptives. In 2009, studies conducted by Congress found that the majority of Americans, adults and teens, saw the necessity for further education and prevention programs. Thus, for the first time, Congress passed two bills allowing for federal funding to be directed towards pregnancy prevention and education programs (Solomon-Fears, 2013).

The fertility rate will constantly fluctuate, however due to the continuously changing and improving technology and social media world, it will be easier to deliver the necessary message and dialogue required to inform our nation's youth about sex and pregnancy. This allows our adult and government population to develop rules, regulations, and education programs to assist in the decline in fertility rate.

Many factors play a role in affecting fertility trends, some other major influences being geographic location, race, age and sex. After a review of articles pertaining to fertility trends across the nation, the data shows a vast difference throughout time in regards to the above mentioned factors. In the realm of demography it is important to understand how history and periodical transitions, provide an ever-changing population.

Hogan and Kitagawa's work allowed the researchers to gather statistics and examine the historical trends pertaining to the African American population in relation to fertility rates. The article goes on to discuss the patterns of fertility rates due to the subjects' geographic location and location subsets, such as rural, urban or suburban. Historically, the African American population in relation to the Caucasian population has been at lower socioeconomic statuses due to the limitations of education and resources in society for African American men (Hogan, D.; Kitagawa, E.). Having these implications of society, affects the way fertility is handled within the household and "like" community.

The article goes on to explain the relationship between class, socioeconomic and fertility trends within a lower class community. Where most households have a single-mother headed household makes keeping the youth regulated and educated, difficult. This then leads to higher teen pregnancy and high fertility rates. In the household a young adolescent female may

experience growing up with a young mother and watch her siblings become young parents, leading her to believe that childbearing is a rite-of-passage.

Another trend throughout history would be the fertility rates among women. Until more recent years women were staying home in order to tend to children and childbearing served as a means of life, providing the family with sufficient ways to tend to the land and work. In the later years around the WWII era, women started to enter into the workforce and women started to go to college and hold college degrees.

Now that women are obtaining college degrees and working, fertility rates across the nation were declining. In Shang and Weinberg's article the researchers look at the fertility rates in relation to past trends among women. The research compares the fertility rates among women who are educated (hold a college degree) and the women who are not educated. The results indicate that there is a higher percentage of uneducated women having children than educated women. The results also found that a conditional characteristic of educated women is that their marriage rates (opposed to never being married) were much lower than those who were not educated, or less educated. This being vital in looking at a possible explanation as to why fertility rates are lower the more educated a woman is. The research exposed an important point, which is that educated women are still opting to have children, but at a later age and most likely with the help of fertility drugs.

Fertility is complex, resulting in different opinions on the topic based on each individual experience. Steven E. Barkan explains in his article the connection between religion and sex before marriage. To people of certain religions, premarital sex is deemed immoral, disapproved and anti-religious. Barkan explains that religious involvement and that produced conforming to the "norm" with some exceptions, most people conformed. It wasn't until the 1970's when people started to openly rebel and act upon premarital sex openly regardless of their religion. This evidence has proved the increasing acceptable of the inverse relationship between religiosity and sexuality. Barkan mentions Durkheim as one who considered religion to be the strongest force in being able to induce conformity. By giving people an understandable set of beliefs, religiosity created moral behaviors that were practiced by all, creating conformity. However, religious venues and events often bring those of similar beliefs together. On the

contrary, Barkan touches on certain scholars who have went on to discuss the process of social learning and social control in these situations, which could cause an attraction between people who are similar and create a parallel between religiosity and deviant behavior such as sexual practices. Others argue, “because religious individuals are more likely to internalize and follow such norms, they are less likely to behave with deviance”; some in fear of what could possible happen to their fate if they disobey and don’t conform.

Barkan goes into looking at different studies that examine religious and sexual behaviors among a national sample of adults. These studies yielded mixed results. Barkan stresses the importance of the need for more studies on this topic due to the over abundance of religiosity and premarital sex on adolescence. Barkan found that “premarital sex by never-married adults, religiosity has a consistent, fairly strong, and statistically significant deterrent effect on the number of sexual partners.”

In the article written by Bamikale Feyisetan and John B. Casterline, the authors discuss how the increase in contraceptive prevalence in developing countries since the year 1960 has been debated. The authors looked at the Contraceptive prevalence data from the World Fertility Survey and Demographic and Health Surveys for over 20 countries throughout Latin America, Asia and Africa. The study researched that fertility has declined dramatically since 1960 in developing countries where there was also an increase in contraceptive prevalence. The factors that could cause this dramatic decline were characterized as “demand-side” and “supply-side” factors. “demand” being the demand for children, which is one's desire to avoid pregnancy in terms of “reproductive career being their age or the number of children that they already had.” Where the “supply” is referred to the struggles of obtaining contraception to avoid pregnancy. This being to the high costs, the lack of accessible family planning services, and cultural factors. Both the “demand-side” and the “supply-side” has caused the decline in fertility since the 1960’s and prove a need for better technology, social legitimacy and practice of the use of contraceptives.

Contraception

Executive Summary

- Top ten greatest health achievements of the 20th century
- Contraception can be linked to later marital age, smaller families, longer birth intervals, and the control over how many children a couple wishes to have.
- The main reasons women use birth control are--they are not ready to have children; want to focus on their life goals, and having a child would interfere/postpone them; not financially stable to properly care and provide for a child; and they like the fact that they now have control over their fertility.
- Even though women use contraceptives, there are still a lot of unplanned pregnancies.
- Issues with funding

An Introduction to the Importance of Contraceptive Funding

The advent of contraception in the US in the past 30 years has been deemed as one of the 10 greatest public health achievements of the 20th century (CDC). Recently, basic forms of contraception are widely included in preventive care services for women. These advances in contraception awareness and use have improved the physical and mental health of women around the world. Positive research indicates that contraceptive use has been linked to later marital age, smaller families, longer birth intervals, and couple's control of family size. Unfortunately, funding to women's healthcare and family planning services has been cut dramatically. Worldwide, men and women have linked economic and health benefits to the use of birth control. In this section, we will explore the topic of contraception use in the United States and the why effects it has on women, men, and couples make it an important investment.

In the article, Reasons for Using Contraception: Perspectives of US Women Seeking Care at Specialized Family Planning Clinics (2013), researchers Frost and Lindberg surveyed 2,094 women who were receiving services in 22 family planning clinics located in 13 states in the U.S. Their findings reveal that 55 percent of the women were in their twenties. Of that 55 percent, 58 percent of them reported having no children. When asked about the importance of birth control, 63 percent of twenty year olds said that it allowed them to take better care of themselves and/or their family. Once Frost and Lindberg compared the responses, they found that the most common reason for women to use birth control was financial instability, which would not allow them to

properly provide for a child. Four other popular responses women reported as reasons to use contraception were: not being ready to have children, children would interrupt and delay their career goals, being able to control their life, and wanting to have stability in their life before children (Frost and Lindberg). The variety of reasons that women reported for using contraception indicates that women want to control and improve their quality of life. With contraception they are better able to achieve a lifestyle they deserve. The importance of publicly funded family planning services, to an extent, reflects the opportunities and importance we give to women American society.

The Advancement of Contraceptives

Although there is a funding issue with family planning in the United States, there are still many available options for contraception. In the article *New Developments in Contraception for US Women* (2013) by Laneta Dorflinger, the recent developments in contraception options over the past 50 years are discussed. Despite the variety of options that women have for birth control, the number of unplanned pregnancies in the 21st century have been consistently high compared to the decreasing trend since 1950s. Since the introduction of the birth control pill in the 1950s, other forms of contraception have been created, such as implants, injectables, vaginal rings, patches, intrauterine system, and female condoms (Dorflinger). Her research shows that in 2006, more than half of the seven million pregnancies were unplanned. A poignant part of her data showed that of those unintended pregnancies, half of the women were using some form of contraception (Dorflinger). This is theoretically linked to a possible incorrect use of the contraception which in turn points out the equal importance of education on contraception use. This theory is supported by the lower rate of unplanned pregnancies for women who have IUDs and implants which are properly administered by a doctor. 80 percent of women in the US reported that their form of birth control requires daily action, and because of this, there is much room for human error. It is common for women to only consider a handful of options when choosing a birth control method, but as new methods are introduced it is the responsibility of healthcare providers to inform their patients about the best options available for their lifestyle (Cite? Dorflinger). In the following paragraphs, various updates to contraception forms will be discussed.

Types of Contraception

Advancements in contraception has given women more options for what type of birth control they wish to use. Rather than the daily pill, there are now hormone-releasing intrauterine systems (IUS) available. IUS is a small, plastic device that sits inside the womb and contains a progestogen hormone that “forms a plug which stops the sperm [from] getting through to the uterus to fertilize an egg” (Lowth, 2014). The increase of IUS in the past 30 years has been driven by the introduction of Mirena. New systems such as these are being developed to increase comfort during insertion, decrease cost, and increase duration period, thus adding to the desirability of the product. Another form that is currently entering into the US market is a weekly contraceptive patch. These patches are smaller, contain lower doses, and are transparent. Vaginal rings, (the most popular being NuvaRing) is used by almost one million women in the United States. The ring is put in place for three weeks and then removed for one week. However, in order to provide a more long-term effect, a new ring is being developed that can be inserted for one year. Since this will be put in place for a full year, this contraceptive choice would be more cost effective seeing that there would be fewer doctor visits and little to no resupply. The form of contraception least used in the United States is what is referred to as female barriers, including female condoms and diaphragms. These methods are commonly used by women that cannot take hormonal contraception but still want some form of protection. Women prefer these methods because they can prevent the transmission of STDs and STIs. About 3 percent of women who use contraception in the United States prefer the highly effective monthly injectables. Roughly 2.5 million women choose this method worldwide and report fewer problems during menstruation. Whereas the forms discussed above are only developed by a few brands, there are 88 different brands of oral contraceptives. 11 million women in the United States alone use oral contraceptive making it the most commonly used method. Over the last 50 years, since their inception, many changes have been made to oral contraceptives to enhance safety and reduce the side effects when taken incorrectly. *Source*?

Even with the wide variety of contraceptive options for women in the US, there has not been a new breakthrough method in roughly 30 years. The methods that are currently on the

market still do not meet the needs of all women. Some women still need simple to use, low cost, non-surgical, and highly effective sterilization methods ← what does this even mean?. (why is this? Explain more ALSO i thought birth control was free for some based on their insurance... or I thought Obama actually made some birth control free about 2 yrs ago) They would also benefit from methods that prevent pregnancy and the transmission of STDs and STIs (Condoms?). New contraceptive techniques would improve the health and lives of women in the US and abroad and reduce unintended pregnancies.

- It seems like the bigger problem is this (maybe this could replace the concluding paragraph to this section?):

The Affordable Care Act has helped women recently have better access to expensive contraceptives such as the pill or the IUS (SORRY LAZY <https://www.healthcare.gov/coverage/birth-control-benefits/>). Even so, as discussed earlier, there is the issue of women knowing about these opportunities due to bad communication with their doctors (Dorflinger?). There is also criticism in the lack of research for new birth control methods.

Drawbacks in Birth Control Methods

With so many different contraceptive methods on the market, it is important to understand the pros and cons of contraception, as well as consider the different types based on their effectiveness. In *Contraceptive Failure in the United States* (2011), author James Trussell explores the assortment of contraceptive options available to the public and their effectiveness when used typically, perfectly and imperfectly. The results for this article are pulled from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) from 1995-2002.

Trussell researches the first-year probabilities of contraceptive failure for all methods of contraception available in the U.S. He focuses on the probabilities of failure during “typical use” (which includes both incorrect and inconsistent use) and during “perfect use” (correct and consistent use). He explains that the difference between these two probabilities reveals the consequences of “imperfect use” and depends both on “how unforgiving of imperfect use a method is and on how hard it is to use that method perfectly”. Imperfect use of condoms means

that “typical use” of contraception is up to interpretation and perception because someone who says they “typically use condoms” may only use them one in a while and there is no way to correctly measure the real frequency of use (source? 2011). The article lists contraceptive products from least to most effective. The least effective methods include spermicides and withdrawal (also commonly known as the pull-out method), and fertility-awareness (ovulation, “TwoDay”, symptothermal, etc.) methods, while most effective methods consist of IUDs and sterilization (vasectomy). Results estimated that without any form of contraception, 85 out of 100 sexually active couples would become pregnant within one year. Other estimates Trussell made from the NSFG survey were for typical use of contraception. For withdrawal, the percentage of pregnancy was 22 percent, fertility-awareness based methods were 24 percent, the male condom was 18 percent, and the pill was 9 percent. Through the measurements of effectiveness presented in this article, Trussell concluded that there needed to be much more research done into the effectiveness of typical contraception use in order to fully discover the effectiveness for the average person.

Trends in Sterilization

One particular form of contraception that researchers have examined is sterilization. There are forms of sterilization for both men and women, but there are different circumstances under which men and women would use sterilization as a method, and different consequences that come along with it. To begin, we will explore sterilization trends for women. In *Female Sterilization in the United States* (2011), Zite, Nikki and Borrero discuss the trends in female sterilization. A national survey from 2006-2008 studied 10,000 women who had gone through the sterilization process, and showed that 17 percent of women, ages 15 to 44, were sterilized in the United States. Sterilization is the second most commonly used form of contraception in the United States and one of the safest and most effective permanent birth control methods in the world.

Despite the effectiveness of this method, there is a high level of post-sterilization regret, mostly due to a later desire to have more children. There is also a lack of education about sterilization that can contribute to the regret. For example, some people are led to believe that the procedure can be reversed easily. Another major barrier is insurance policies—most insurance

companies do not cover reversal processes and some do not cover sterilization in general. Furthermore, the increasing use of long-term reversible contraception, such as the IUD, also plays as a major barrier. Due to the newer, hassle-free contraceptives that contain the same level of effectiveness but is reversible, the possibility that female sterilization will decline is high. However, regardless of these barriers, the sterilization method has remained popular in the United States.

Additionally, Zite, Nikki and Borrero (2011) found that female sterilization is also dependent on racial and ethnic factors. Both Black and Hispanic women are more likely to use sterilization as a contraceptive method compared to White women. Another major factor is age, as older women are more likely to use this method than younger women.

In an article by Forste, Tanfer, and Tedrow (1995), *Sterilization Among Currently Married Men in the United States*, decisions for sterilization in couples, particularly among men, is explored. According to the authors, men are often neglected in research about contraceptive decisions and this study gave some insight into men's decisions.

This article used data from the 1991 National Survey of Men in the United States, which included 3,321 men ages 20-39. It looked at the effects of individual and couple's characteristics for sterilization decisions. The study focused mainly on demographic and social characteristics including age, race, religion, and level of education. From these results, the authors found that male sterilization was more likely to occur when the male was Protestant, the couple was white and in which the husband had completed high school. As it did with women, the likelihood for male sterilization increased with age. Additionally, sterilization likelihood increased if the partners were the same race or religion. It also increases if the couple has already experienced an unplanned pregnancy.

Emergence of Birth Control in America

Sterilization and birth control pills, as well as the numerous other contraceptive devices, have existed for many decades. In Andrea Tone's piece, *Contraceptive Consumers: Gender and the Political Economy of Birth Control in the 1930s* (1996), she describes the emergence of birth control in America, particularly its development through the media and the consumer industry. As the article explains, in a time of great economic hardship, birth control was a temptation of

many Americans in their desire to control their family size. During this time, the sale of contraceptives was prohibited, so manufacturers labeled them as “feminine hygiene” products in hopes for capital gain. Because of their concealed purpose as contraceptives, the consumers were unable to get legal retribution if the products were not effective. Additionally, women’s health was put at risk due to the lack of information about each product. Advertisers, in an aim to boost their sales, targeted women both urging them to be the main provider of pregnancy prevention and instilling fear of pregnancy in them. In the early 1900s, Margaret Sanger brought about the first major birth control movement campaigning for the woman’s right to birth control. Finally, a small win for the campaign emerged, the “One Package” enacted by the Supreme Court in 1936 allowed doctors to administer contraceptives and information about them.

While rights to birth control have increased and the taboo of their use have decreased in America, there is still discussion concerning insurance coverage of contraception. In *Changes In Out-Of-Pocket Payments for Contraception By Privately Insured Women During Implementation of the Federal Contraceptive Coverage Requirement* (2014), Finer and his colleagues looked at the effects of the coverage requirement in the United States. In 2013, the Affordable Care Act required that contraceptives be covered by private health plans in order to allow patients the opportunity to obtain them without paying in-full themselves. Already in 2002, close to 90 percent of contraceptive methods were covered by most insurance plans. Exemption has been given to those plans provided by religious actors and employers who counter the coverage of contraceptives. Data gathered from women 18-39 years old, respondents of two points in time (waves) from a national longitudinal survey, was used. The respondents were questioned about the amount of money they spent on contraceptives in a month. Their results show that between the Fall of 2012 and Spring of 2013, there was a significant increase in the number of women insured by private health plans who paid nothing for oral contraceptives (from 15 to 40 percent). However, there was no substantial change for those women insured by public plans or who were uninsured. The article notes that the first enforcement of contraceptive coverage had a substantial effect on the “out-of-pocket costs” that privately insured women paid. The researchers conclude that continued progress is probable, however they explain that any further enforcement should consider all methods equally in their coverage.

An increased coverage of contraceptive methods could be a large factor contributing to the rise in some contraceptives and American society today. In an article by Piccinino and Mosher, Trends in Contraceptive Use in the United States: 1982-1985 (1998), the researchers identified changes in subgroups of the population and discuss the important trends in contraceptive use among them. Samples of women able to reproduce were taken from the National Survey of Family Growth of 1995 and this data was compared to similar data from 1982 and 1988 to determine any trends. Their findings suggest that there was an 8 percent increase in contraceptive use from 1982 to 1995 as well as a 4 percent increase in use of birth control pills from 1988 to 1995. Particularly, among never-married and Black women under the age of 25 there was a large drop in pill use and an increase in the use of condoms. Additionally, the researchers found that over several years a negative association between pill use and diaphragm use appeared. The researchers emphasized the importance of studying contraceptive use due to its ability to determine pregnancy and birth rates as well as whether contraceptive needs of subpopulations are being met.

Trends and Causes of Teen Pregnancy and its Effects and Influences on Society

Executive Summary

- Teen fertility has steadily been decreasing.
- Life hardships such as abuse and family instability increase the likelihood of pregnancy for teenage girls.
- Shows about teenage pregnancy do not increase teen pregnancy rates, and may in fact lead to lower rates.
- Teenage pregnancy doesn't have as pertinent economic, social and educational problems as has previously been said. However, it does seem to cause significant emotional problems.

Teenage pregnancy has long been an issue in the United States. Throughout time, there have been changes in teen birth rates, to which we owe to a variety of factors. Understanding this

complex issue and its components takes the knowledge of several different aspects of teen life and its ever-present challenges. This essay will explore the topics and trends in teen pregnancy, causes, media influences and the effects that teen pregnancy has on not only the mothers, but their families and friends, as well.

Trends in Teenage Pregnancy

Media portrayal of teen pregnancy may make it seem like a bigger problem than it actually is. In fact, teen pregnancy rates have greatly decreased over the past years, and are the lowest they have ever been. The CDC looked at teen pregnancy from 1991-2011. They used data on teen birth rates from vital statistics, contraceptive use and sexual intercourse from the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey and information from the National Survey of Family Growth to form their conclusions. They found that the teen birth rate from 39.1 births per 1,000 females in 2009 was a 37% decrease from the rate in 1991 of 61.8 births per 1,000 females, and also the lowest on record. Rates have greatly decreased, however, according to this article, they are still quite high especially among black, Hispanic, and Southern teenagers.

This paper from the Center for Disease Control uses official, reliable data to report trends and draw their conclusions. Because of the data they use, their claims are more accurate than if they were to get it from a survey, where they would need to generalize their data. The article is quite concise, and provides a lot of information about teen fertility rates from 1991-2009. The article contains charts that show information about teenager's sexual intercourse, condom use and other birth control methods. It shows data from multiple years, so the trends are quite clear, as well as how they relate to teen pregnancy rates.

The authors of the article, "Changing Behavioral Risk for Pregnancy Among High School Students in the United States, 1991–2007" found that pregnancy risk, measured by behaviors, correlated with actual teen pregnancy and birth rates in the time frames they were studying. Teen birth rates in 2006 and 2007 increased, which fall in line with the studies findings. Behavioral risk factors did not change significantly after 2003, but there was a change in risk associated with contraceptive use, which most likely led to the increased teen birth rate. The authors believe that this trend may increase into 2008.

The authors used data from the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey to estimate pregnancy risk. They then compared their research to actual pregnancy rates from 15-29 year old women. The author's estimation of pregnancy risk did in fact match up with actual pregnancy risk. They used weighted logistic and linear regression and controlled for certain factors. This helped to ensure that their results were more accurate. However, the authors do acknowledge limits of their results. The data was self reported by teenagers and may be slightly inaccurate. Also, pregnancy risk is unlikely to equal the actual pregnancy rate. Regardless, their findings still reflect real pregnancy trends.

The article from the CDC does not mention the increase in the teen birth rate in 2006 and 2007. The authors of the pregnancy risk article suggested that the teen birth rate may continue to rise into 2008. However, the CDC article analyzed information up to 2009 and found that the rate in 2009 was the lowest recorded. The article on pregnancy risk does acknowledge the great decline in teen pregnancies. Both articles looked at actual teen birth rates as well as data from the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The CDC may not have discussed the 2006 and 2007 increase because the trend overall is downward. Both articles cite contraception as a key factor in decreasing teen pregnancy. They both also discuss the fact that blacks and Hispanics have a higher teen birth rate and are more at risk for teen pregnancy.

Causes of Teenage Pregnancy

Teenage pregnancy is a widespread issue that many young adults are faced with each year, and results in a variety of different problems for these adolescent parents. The problem of teen fertility often sparks debates and controversy due to the negative effects and generalization about the moral character of these young mothers. However a less-talked about part of teen pregnancy, and maybe even a way to solve this issue is the cause. Looking at the causes can allow us to understand how this situation comes to be and can offer ways to help prevent it as well. Many people tend to see these teens as irresponsible and lacking respect for themselves, which can be true at times, but it is our responsibility to ask the question of why these young mothers lack a positive self image and respect for their bodies to understand the causes of teenage pregnancy and eventually understand how to bring an end to this epidemic.

Surprisingly, studies find that there is more to being a teen mother than just raging hormones and sex drive, as commonly thought. Teen fertility is often thought to be caused by lack of guardianship and lack of proper judgment on the teenager's end. It is often shown in a negative light because many people see the parents as reckless and irresponsible, and blame them for not using proper protection to prevent pregnancy. What most fail to see, however, is that there is an underlying cause to teens being sexually active. While many hold these individuals accountable, the real reasons are more psychologically and emotionally driven. Studies have shown that women who engage in these risky behaviors are doing so due to a lack of self-respect and worth, which can be caused by a variety of different issues in their own childhoods. These surveys and studies have shown that young women growing up with emotional pain are more likely to engage in risky behaviors and see themselves in a more negative way than most. According to one study, "Women exposed to abuse, violence and family strife in childhood are more likely than those without such experiences to have a teenage pregnancy; the greater the number of adverse childhood experiences, the higher the likelihood of pregnancy".

Additionally, The Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics released their findings on teen pregnancy rates in relation to women who faced adverse childhood experiences. The research study looked into the causes of teen pregnancy and found that those who had experienced teen pregnancy also had hardships in their lives during childhood. The study investigated childhood abuse and family dysfunction as possible causes for the epidemic, and found that these two things play a specific factor. In fact, they found that teenage pregnancy rates were significantly higher for children who grew up with an incarcerated family member, experienced childhood sexual abuse, endured childhood emotional abuse, endured childhood physical abuse, reported household substance abuse, lived with a mentally ill family member during childhood, were exposed to intimate partner violence, and had endured separated or divorced parents compared to women who did not experience these things.

Another study looked at teen fertility as a behavioral risk for pregnancy in high school students. It discusses how sexual education in schools is also important in the rise and fall of teen pregnancy rates, and credits these decreases to contraceptive use and sexual education classes. It brings up the important issue of sex education and its value in preventing young adults from

becoming young parents. While emotional suffering is a big factor in teen pregnancy, the use of contraceptives and proper instruction on safe sex, or lack thereof is a more direct and immediate cause of the issue that is young women becoming impregnated.

As a society, we often point blame these young mothers, but reject the underlying social causes of what drives these women to engage in risky and dangerous behaviors such as underage, unprotected sex. It is easy to see how girls who are abused at home or deal with a torn family develop with a different sense of themselves than other girls. On the contrary, some partners do not fully understand the risks or effects that unprotected sex carries. Teens sometimes fail to properly use protection, or choose to use no protection altogether, for whatever personal reasons. As all of the research on the topic of teen fertility shows, the causes of these adolescents engaging in risky behaviors can range from problems in education, personal enjoyment, and emotional weight that leads to low self-esteem, and end in the widespread problem of becoming pregnant at a young age.

Media Influences on Teen Pregnancy

While many think the media abuse their power by glamorizing teenage sexuality, they may be doing just the opposite, according to recent data.

It is often contemplated how television affects its viewers, especially since TV viewing is ever increasing as time goes on. Since the media has a powerful grip on culture and society, there is value in researching and understanding how programs such as *Teen Mom*, *16 and Pregnant* and their close relatives play a part in the teen fertility rate in the United States. Some would argue that these shows show teens the negative effects of having a child at a young age, while others would argue that shows like these encourage teens to have children.

According to an article by Melissa S. Kearney and Phillip B. Levine, TV programs that showcase teen pregnancy have led to a drop in teen fertility rates. In 2012, the United States had the highest number of teen births out of any other developed country. According to the article, 24.9 out of 1,000 teen girls aged 15-19, gave birth in the U.S. during that year. The authors of this article use data and research from Google Trends and Twitter. They found that during the airtime of a new episode, there was a spike in searches related to teen pregnancy, birth control and abortion. They also found that there was a 5.7 percent reduction in teen birth rates between

the time the show first aired to the end of the following year. Teen abortion rates also declined that year. This data suggests that these types of shows lead to a lower number of teens getting pregnant, giving birth, or getting abortions. In the study for the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 82 percent of teens said that *16 and Pregnant* “helps teens better understand the challenges of pregnancy and parenthood.” Only 17 percent said that *16 and Pregnant* glamorizes teen pregnancy.

In a broader sense, what teens see on any form of media is shaping their beliefs about human sexuality and their own values as well as the values of society. In an article by Jane D. Brown written in 2002, she mentions that teens spend six to seven hours a day watching TV. Because of the increasing sexualization of the media and the increasing viewership of young people, teens are starting to have sex sooner, according to Brown. The media is in a powerful position to either educate vulnerable teens about their sexuality or to corrupt them by making them confused or uninformed about certain topics. By creating *Teen Mom* and *16 and Pregnant*, MTV took its power and used it to its advantage along with educating teenagers in the US and elsewhere. TV shows such as these bring to light real life issues and challenges teenagers face when they have a child so young. Instead of hiding the truth from the public or not speaking about such a prevalent problem, MTV chose to experiment by televising the lives of pregnant/recently teen mothers to discourage other teenagers from getting pregnant. Teenagers usually think MTV is “cool,” so the station has more control over them than another station would. If MTV can show teenagers how hard it is to be a teen mom, they might think twice about losing their virginity or having unprotected sex.

All in all, the teen fertility rate has decreased since the time shows such as *Teen Mom* and *16 and Pregnant* have aired. The media may be doing the exact opposite of what many people believe it is doing, and it is helping to get the conversation started about teen sex, abortion, birth control and making smart choices.

The Effects of Teenage Pregnancy

With all of the school and public policy surrounding teenage pregnancy, we must look at the effects and consequences of teenage pregnancy on the children and parents. The articles find that this is still very much in contention and there is no solid idea of the effects of teenage

pregnancy. Several articles argue that contrary to popular belief, the effects of teenage pregnancy are not nearly as destructive as once thought. However, several articles also argue that the effects are far more reaching than what is acceptable.

Hotz describes that the effects of teenage pregnancies are not nearly as strong as other studies have shown to be true. He states that:

“By this age (late 20s) teen mothers appear to be better off in some aspects of their lives. Teenage childbearing appears to raise levels of labor supply, accumulated work experience and labor market earnings and appears to reduce the chances of living in poverty and participating in the associated social welfare programs (Hotz 2008).”

He continues to state that the widely held belief that teenage pregnancies cause economic strain the welfare programs does not take into account the pre-existing livelihoods of the parents and how much other people in their economic positions would also use. Hotz does, however, state that many of the negative effects of teenage pregnancies do persist within a short time of the pregnancy.

Kearney agrees with Hotz, stating that, “Surprisingly, teen birth itself does not appear to have much direct economic consequence” (Kearney 2012). Also, Hoffman agrees with Hotz to a certain degree. Hoffman suggests that teenagers who give birth before 18 are not hurt by it in some areas. Hoffman goes on to state that teenagers who have given birth do not receive less income, do not work less, and do not depend on welfare more so than if they were to not have their child. Hoffman retracts some of these statements by stating that in more recent studies, these areas seem to be gaining more increased disparities between having and not having a child. Finally, Hoffman finishes with finding some tenuous links between teenage pregnancies and child abuse.

Each of these articles has been disproving the popular belief that teen pregnancies cause significant economic, educational, or social detriments to the parents. Even with this, we can see that there are several trends that persist through these articles that they do not cover. The first major one is emotional. Becker shows that teen pregnancies have a strong link to many major emotional disabilities. These “negative psychiatric standpoints such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal sensitivity, obsessive-compulsive behavior, dissociation, and suicidality.” (Becker

1995) This increases the likelihood that child abuse will take place. Therefore Becker makes the link between teenage pregnancies and an increase in child abuse which is backed up by several of the case studies conducted in this study. Finally, child abuse and negative emotions cause a higher risk of teenage pregnancies for the children that are born into this, leading to a continuous cycle.

Although public policy and school policy makers try to show the disparities and the disadvantages that teenage parents have to go through, nearly every article shows their cases are much weaker than they let on. From these studies, we can see that there is much debate in this area. However, recent studies have shown that educational and economic disparities are not a reality for teen pregnancies. Hotz even goes on the reverse here (rephrase- “challenges this idea”) stating that there is an increase in these areas for people whom had children in their teens. On the contrary however, Becker tries to illustrate the emotional side of this and demonstrates how there is a significant increase in child abuse and negative emotions in people whom have children in their teens.

In closing, the issue of teenage pregnancy is not one that should be taken lightly, as there is still far more advancement that needs to be done before it can be considered solved. Many factors can contribute to a child’s likelihood of becoming pregnant before her 20th birthday. Some of these factors can be easily prevented while others cannot. As a growing and changing society, it is important to remember that children and teens are easily influenced and persuaded. Talking about traditionally uncomfortable topics such as abortion and birth control seems to lead to less teen pregnancies. The responsibility falls on the adults of society to lead by example. This family issue is one that will remain present in our culture, but will likely keep decreasing with progressing factors.

Divorce in the United States

Executive Summary

- Divorce has always been a part of society but the magnitude and numbers have changed.
- Social acceptance of cohabitation may keep divorce rates where they are.

- Marriage dissolution is most often due to relational and/or behavioral issues not physical abuse.
- There are gender differences in the reasons couples give for their divorce.
- Negative consequences of divorce are more severe for women and children than men.
- Better health and positive outcomes arise out of divorce if the situation and circumstances were negative.

Marriages have been around for centuries, as has the dissolution of them. Divorce may have been around seemingly forever but the social acceptance, laws and trends surrounding the topic have changed over time. These days, there is much controversy over the divorce rate, why it rose and fell, and how we have gotten to where we are now. This idea becomes key in understanding the history of divorce.

History of Divorce

Furstenberg (1994) takes a demographic look at the history of divorce in the last century and the current status that divorce holds in society. He begins by explaining the trends of divorce in America and argues that divorce rates began to rise shortly after the Civil War until the 1960's but then sharply increased in the span of a decade. Additionally, the divorce rate for women rose from 10.6 per 1000 to 22.8 per 1000.

After the 1970's, the divorce rate began to level off, even declining at times, but generally remained relatively the same. The author concludes that divorce rates aren't expected to continue in an upward trend. Many divorced persons are hesitant to remarry and instead choose to cohabitate. While the author does give many good points, another article believes the rise in cohabitation will keep the divorce rate about where it is.

Hilfer (2003) takes a more complex look at the position that divorce holds in American society. He argues that divorce might be an American value and something that Americans hold dear to them. Even in the 1600s, when divorce was rare, America led the world in divorces. This is because of Thomas Jefferson's sentiment of "the pursuit of happiness as a desirable goal," in that Jefferson related independence and happiness with divorce. Therefore, it is American

values of independence and happiness that contribute to a history of high divorce rates in America. Divorce is an American tradition that is rooted in the values of independence and the pursuit of happiness that was etched into our Constitution. Divorce, in that manner has always played a part in an individual's pursuit for their own happiness and independence although it may not have always been the most important thing.

With the pursuit of happiness taking force, divorce became a lawful, socially accepted, and even encouraged part of society and the marriage process. However, many did not understand exactly what caused people to divorce, they only knew that it was happening at a more frequent rate..

Causes and Factors of Divorce

One of the most common statistics about divorce is that around 50 percent of marriages end in it. Due to this situation it becomes important to understand what is going on to cause so many marriages to end in divorce, even if this statistic may not entirely be accurate. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, around 43% of first marriages end in divorce or separation within 15 years in the U.S. (CDC, 2002). We see from the literature that the majority of causes and motives that couples gave when asked about their reasoning behind absolving their marriage, center around communication, growing apart and differences, economics and goals. In some severe and rare cases abuse and infidelity were also mentioned as motive, however, this phenomenon is relatively small in comparison to the other motives. Moreover, there seems to be trends in reasons couples and individuals gave according to gender, with women more likely to report certain behavioral and communicational issues over men.

According to Hawking, Willoughby and Doherty (2012) couples who had their marriages breakdown identified that the main reasons for divorce were in fact communication issues, growing apart, different tastes, and money problems. They found that with these issues a couple was less likely to want to try to save the marriage. Moreover, couples reported that when they ended their marriages they did not want to reconcile, so there really was no way to save their marriage.

Relational issues, behavioral problems and problems, about work and the division of labor have been noted by couples as factors that contributed to the end of their marriages. De Graaf and Kilmijn (2006) argue that infidelity and violence, which are considered to be severe motives, have become less important than other factors such as communication and general happiness. They also find that there is a continuing trend towards issues being related to relational and psychological motives, particularly for women. Additionally, Kopala and Keital (2003, p.231) found that women were much more likely than men to report that they divorced because of instances of physical abuse, quality of the relationship, and feeling unloved or belittled. Men were more likely than women to report issues in the bedroom, general goals differences, and feeling neglected. Men are also more likely to claim infidelity, even though men are statistically more unfaithful than women. This means that with the trends we see in the freedom of women and women's rights, with what once had been a business transaction, women now believe that if they are not happy, they do not have to stay in the relationship. Their findings are consistent with the independent, autonomous attitudes and ideals that are now key within society for both men and women. Additionally, labor realms have also become more central motives for divorce these days. Thus, personal well-being and emotional health have become some of the most important factors that influence divorce.

Past research shows that many factors like characteristics of the spouses and the neighborhoods they live in influence the likelihood that couples will divorce. Djamba et al. (2012) looked at the role of the size of a household in the impact of the divorce rate. They found that the average household size correlated to the divorce rate (at a country level). This meant that the presence of other household members actually caused spouses to be less likely to divorce and remain close. Therefore, bigger families were less likely to divorce than smaller families. Similarly, Gautier, Syarer and Teulings (2009) found a trend that couples who lived in rural areas decreased their likelihood of getting divorced while those who lived in the city slightly increased their likelihood of divorce although no causal relationship was found. However, having younger children was a major variable in whether or not a couple actually divorced because divorcing while having a young child leads to very high costs for both the partners and their child. They concluded by noting that generally, people in more stable relationships tend to move to less

populated areas because they want children, and these suburban areas are considered to be more fit to raise children. This idea overlaps with the findings according to Djamba et al. because the more children one has the more likely they are to have a more stable relationship and need for a bigger space to live. In that manner, cities often do not accommodate for large families. Thus, smaller families continue to live within the city leading to a high rate of divorce.

Almost all the literature agrees that the main cause of divorce were issues centered on communication and the value one puts on the marriage. If a couple believes the marriage is worth saving, they often can save it. But, when differences arise and couples grow apart, the option for reconciliation and the value of the marriage breaks down. Moreover, the literature centers around the idea that something changed during the relationship that caused either both or one of the individuals in a couple to see the issue(s) as irreconcilable and ultimately lead to the breakdown of a marriage.

Consequences and Outcomes

Since divorce has become a common trend in American society, it is also equally as important to understand the consequences that result in couples separating. Divorce not only affects the separated couple, but can have a major effect on children. Children can be affected psychologically, as well as in other aspects, such as in their behavior. Men and women who have been separated are also affected in different ways, including having possible health issues and adjusting in society.

Among those affected by divorce are the children of the divorcees. Whitton, Rhoades, Stanley, and Markman (2008) conducted a study about the effects that divorce can have on commitment and confidence levels of children with divorced parents. It has been hypothesized that women with divorced parents tend to have lower expectations of marriage and have a harder time committing to relationships. This study aimed to test this hypothesis by surveying a number of engaged couples and doing a longitudinal study on them. The results showed that women with divorced parents do in fact have a harder time committing to relationships. Additionally, these women tend to have less confidence in their marriage. The article emphasizes that divorce itself, and not parental conflict, is most likely the cause of women to have lower confidence and

commitment levels. This could be due to a number of reasons, such as the negative effects women face after divorce, and the fact that women tend to be socialized to be relationship-oriented. The article goes on to find that men do not suffer from these same difficulties as often as their female counterpart.

Future relationships of children of divorcees are not the only thing that can be potentially affected by a divorce. A study done by Pagani, Boulerice, Tremblay, and Vitaro (1997) found that divorce can also affect the behavior of children. The study goes on to conclude that children who experienced parental divorce before the age of six exhibited more behavioral disturbances than children who experienced parental divorce at a later age. When divorce was controlled, remarriage did not have a significant effect on the behavior of children in the study (there was an exception, though). The study found that early childhood divorce had long term effects of anxiety, hyperactivity, and oppositional behavior during later childhood. The study did not find disturbance in the behavior of children prior to divorce or remarriage, suggesting that the event, and not its precursors, are what cause the ultimate long-term effects on children.

Divorce also has an affect on other aspects of the divorcees' lives. According to Kitson, Gay, and Morgan, (1990) divorce can affect health in many different ways. Divorced individuals also must go through a number of adjustments on personal and societal levels. The article cites different studies, allowing for a broader view on the topics, as well as possible explanations for why findings may differ from one another. For example, in the section about health consequences, the article says that one study found that a divorced person was not more distressed than a married person who was almost at a point of divorce. However, in another study, the level of distress increased as time went on. The article also mentions that when health consequences are measured, there are many other factors that overlap and make it difficult to pinpoint whether or not divorce is the sole factor that impacts individuals in a certain way.

The research conducted on the effects of divorce imply that most negative consequences of divorce affect women and young children. The research does, however, touch on some aspects of divorce that negatively impact the mental health of men. Overall, divorce has many negative affects on individuals but there can also be many positive effects depending on the quality of the

relationship. Ultimately families need to consider both the pros and the cons of divorce, considering the history, causes and consequences of such a big decision, and it is up to them to determine what is right for them and their family.

Conclusion

Studying marriage, fertility, migration, morbidity, families, and more; demographers are able to understand populations to create predictions about the future. Family is an important aspect of these predictions, and with such a wide range of topics demographers are always able to obtain new data to make new predictions and assumptions of what might happen.

Cohabitation affects marriage and fertility and is strongly affected by education. Cohabitation tends to lead to a higher divorce rate. Cohabitation may lead to more childbearing for unmarried women in general. Lower education may lead to more cohabitation and less use of contraceptives. Function of marriage is something that changed over time. Marriage rates have declined in the past decade; there are fewer marriages now than ever before. When discussing marriage, race is a very important factor to take into account. There are many socio-economic benefits to marriage. Reasons for marriage have evolved over time. Women who earned a higher education and/or entered the workforce made financial gains as well as gains in their home life. Primary caretakers have changed as fathers and grandparents have stepped up to care for children. Families separated by borders still had the same responsibilities and shared the same burden as families living together. Overview of fertility and recent trends into what has occurred in America, as well as the rest of the developed world. Focus shifts to the specific reasons for America's fertility rate being what it is, including infant and maternal mortality, contraception, and racial disparities in various social constructs such as the prison system and workforce. The relationship between education level (specifically college), socioeconomic standing, and fertility is also examined. Concluded with a brief look into fertility in developing countries to compare to the United States. Contraception is one of the top ten greatest health achievements of the 20th century. Contraception can be linked to later marital age, smaller families, longer birth intervals, and the control over how many children a couple wishes to have. The main reasons women use

birth control are--they are not ready to have children; want to focus on their life goals, and having a child would interfere/postpone them; not financially stable to properly care and provide for a child; and they like the fact that they now have control over their fertility. Even though women use contraceptives, there are still a lot of unplanned pregnancies. Contraceptive still has major issues with funding which makes it unavailable to everyone. Teen fertility has steadily been decreasing. Life hardships such as abuse and family instability increase the likelihood of pregnancy for teenage girls. Shows about teenage pregnancy do not increase teen pregnancy rates, and may in fact lead to lower rates. Teenage pregnancy doesn't have as pertinent economic, social and educational problems as has previously been said. However, it does seem to cause significant emotional problems. Divorce has always been a part of society but the magnitude and numbers have changed. Social acceptance of cohabitation may keep divorce rates where they are. Marriage dissolution is most often due to relational and/or behavioral issues not physical abuse. There are gender differences in the reasons couples give for their divorce. Negative consequences of divorce are more severe for women and children than men. Better health and positive outcomes arise out of divorce if the situation and circumstances were negative.

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